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# AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS Canberra

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## JOB VACANCIES, AUSTRALIA, FEBRUARY 1980

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### INQUIRIES

*If you want to know more about these statistics ring Mr Nigel Powell on Canberra 526658 or our State office, or write to Information Services, ABS, P.O. Box 10, Belconnen A.C.T. 2616*

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### MAIN FEATURES

**NOTE:** *The survey estimates are subject to sampling variability, as explained in paragraphs 13 to 15.*

The estimated number of job vacancies in Australia, as measured by the February 1980 survey, was 37,800, an increase of 3,500 since November 1979.

The principal industries in which vacancies were recorded were manufacturing (12,100) and public administration and community services (11,200).

There were about nine vacancies per 1,000 jobs (i.e. filled plus unfilled).

### EXPLANATORY NOTES

#### Introduction

In order to obtain information about job vacancies the ABS conducted sample surveys of employers by mail in March each year from 1974 to 1978. Quarterly surveys, designed for the collection of a limited amount of data by telephone from a relatively small sample of employers, were introduced in May 1977.

2. The annual and quarterly surveys were suspended in March and May 1978, respectively, as part of the measures necessary to bring the activities of the ABS within the resources available to it at that time.

3. Quarterly surveys, conducted as at the third Friday of the month, were reintroduced in May 1979, but it is not proposed at present to reintroduce the annual surveys.

#### Scope and coverage

4. The surveys cover vacancies in private employment and in Australian, State and local government employment. All vacancies (as defined in paragraph 8) for wage and salary earners are included except those:

- (a) in the defence forces
- (b) in agriculture
- (c) in private households employing staff
- (d) for employees of private employers (other than hospitals) not subject to payroll tax.

5. Because of limitations in scope and coverage, the survey results do not give estimates of the total number of job vacancies in Australia.

#### Sample design

6. Respondents included in the survey were selected from lists of private and government employers stratified by State, industry and number of employees. Employers with 1,200 or more employees were fully enumerated and a sample was selected from the remainder of employers. The total number of employers in the survey was about 3,100.

7. The small size of the sample has imposed some restrictions on the amount of detail that can be published. Estimates are provided, for each State and Territory, of the numbers of vacancies for males, for females, and for either males or females without preference, and of vacancies in manufacturing and other industries, together with job vacancy rates. Estimates of the number of job vacancies in selected industries are also provided, for Australia only.

#### Definitions

8. A *job vacancy* is a job available for immediate filling on the survey date and for which recruitment action had been taken by the employer. Recruitment action includes efforts to fill vacancies by advertising, by factory notices, by notifying government or private employment agencies or trade unions and by contacting, interviewing or selecting applicants already registered with the enterprise or organisation. Excluded are jobs available only to existing employees of the organisation. In this context the Australian Public Service and the Public Services of the States and the Northern Territory are treated as 'organisations'. Also excluded are vacancies

- (a) of less than one day's duration
- (b) to be filled by persons already hired or by promotion or transfer of existing employees
- (c) to be filled by employees returning from paid or unpaid leave or after industrial disputes
- (d) not available for immediate filling on the survey date
- (e) not available within the particular State or Territory to which the return relates
- (f) for work carried out under contract
- (g) for which no effort is being made to fill the position.



9. *Vacancies for males or females* are those jobs open to male or female applicants without preference.

10. The *job vacancy rate* is calculated by expressing the number of job vacancies as a percentage of the number of employees plus vacancies.

#### **Discontinuity of series**

11. In the series up to May 1978, vacancies in the government sector referred to all those that were not restricted to persons already employed within a *particular department or authority*. From May 1979 they refer *only* to those vacancies which are not restricted to persons already employed within a *particular government sector*, e.g. a State Public Service or the Australian Public Service. This change has had a significant effect on the estimates for the Australian Capital Territory.

12. Vacancies of less than one day's duration have been excluded. This may have had some slight effect on comparability with the results of surveys in the period to May 1978.

#### **Reliability of the estimates**

13. Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from a sample of employers, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if the information had been obtained from all employers within the scope of the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the *standard error*, which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of employers was included in the survey. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all employers had been included and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

14. Standard errors of Australian estimates are shown in Tables 1 and 2. Standard errors of estimates for States and Territories are generally not greater than 20 per cent. The standard errors of the differences between quarterly estimates are approximately the same as the standard errors of the estimates themselves.

15. An example of the use of standard errors is as follows. The survey estimate of the number of job vacancies in Australia in February 1980 is 37,800. From Table 1 it will be seen that the standard error of this estimate is 1,800 and therefore there are about two chances in three that the value that would have been produced if all employers within the scope of the survey had been included will be within the range 36,000 to 39,600, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the value will be within the range 34,200 to 41,400.

#### **Seasonal factors**

16. Comparison of job vacancy figures at different dates may be affected by seasonal influences. Calculation of seasonally adjusted figures will not be possible until results of quarterly surveys for two or three years are available.

#### **Related publications**

17. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications which are available on request :

*Unemployment, Australia (Preliminary Estimates)* (6201.0)

*The Labour Force, Australia (Preliminary)* (6202.0)

*The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0)

*Civilian Employees, Australia* (6213.0)

*Job Vacancies, May 1978* (6231.0)

18. All current publications produced by the ABS are listed in *Catalogue of Publications* (1101.0) which is available free of charge from any ABS office.

#### **Symbols and other usages**

- nil, or less than half the final digit shown
- break in continuity of series (where drawn across a column between two consecutive series)
- \* subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes

19. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

R. J. CAMERON  
Australian Statistician

TABLE 1. JOB VACANCIES AND JOB VACANCY RATES (a)

	Number of vacancies ('000)						Job vacancy rate (a) (per cent)
	For males	For females	For males or females	Manufacturing (b)	Other industries (c)	Total	
1977 -							
May	18.6	8.1	12.6	11.4	27.9	39.3	0.9
August	19.7	7.6	13.8	12.0	29.0	41.0	0.9
November	16.7	5.3	14.4	9.3	27.1	36.4	0.9
1978 -							
February	13.6	6.8	15.6	9.4	26.6	36.0	0.8
May	13.2	5.8	13.2	9.3	23.0	32.2	0.8
1979 -							
May (d)	14.8	6.2	13.3	9.8	24.5	34.3	0.8
August	13.7	5.8	13.4	10.1	22.9	33.0	0.8
November	13.0	5.0	16.3	8.5	25.9	34.3	0.8
1980 -							
February	15.9	5.0	16.9	12.1	25.7	37.8	0.9
Standard error of estimates and of quarterly movements	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.0	1.5	1.8	0.05

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 8 to 10. (b) Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC) Division C. (c) ASIC Divisions A to L excluding Division C (Manufacturing), Sub-divisions 01, 02 (agriculture, etc.), 94 (private households employing staff) and defence forces. (d) See paragraphs 11 and 12 regarding discontinuity of series.

TABLE 2. JOB VACANCIES (a) : INDUSTRY ('000)

Industry	Number				Standard error (b)
	May 1979	August 1979	November 1979	February 1980	
Manufacturing (c)	9.8	10.1	8.5	12.1	1.0
Metal products, machinery and equipment	5.2	5.7	4.5	6.0	0.5
Basic metal and fabricated metal products;					
other machinery, etc.	3.6	4.4	3.6	5.1	0.5
Transport equipment	1.6	1.3	0.9	0.9	0.1
Other manufacturing	4.6	4.4	4.0	6.1	0.8
Other industries (d)	24.5	22.9	25.9	25.7	1.5
Wholesale and retail trade	6.1	4.5	4.7	5.2	0.8
Transport and storage; communication	1.1	1.4	1.9	2.7	0.2
Public administration; community services	10.0	8.8	11.8	11.2	0.8
Other	7.3	8.2	7.5	6.6	1.0
Total	34.3	33.0	34.3	37.8	1.8

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 8 to 10. (b) Applicable to both the estimates and the quarterly movements. See paragraph 14. (c) ASIC Division C. (d) See note (c) to Table 1.

TABLE 3. JOB VACANCIES AND JOB VACANCY RATES (a), STATES AND TERRITORIES

Month	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Australia
JOB VACANCIES ( <sup>000</sup> )									
Total -									
1979 - May	14.0	10.6	3.5	2.2	2.1	(b)0.7	0.5	0.7	34.3
August	13.8	9.5	3.8	(b)2.2	1.9	(b)0.6	0.4	0.9	33.0
November	14.8	8.9	4.3	1.7	2.4	0.9	0.4	0.9	34.3
1980 - February	17.1	10.3	3.8	1.6	2.5	(b)1.0	(b)0.7	0.8	37.8
For males -									
1979 - May	6.1	4.2	1.8	(b)0.7	1.2	0.3	0.3	(b)0.1	14.8
August	6.3	3.3	1.8	*	0.8	0.2	(b)0.2	*	13.7
November	6.9	2.4	1.8	0.5	(b)0.9	0.3	(b)0.2	-	13.0
1980 - February	8.6	3.5	1.5	(b)0.6	1.2	0.3	(b)0.2	-	15.9
For females -									
1979 - May	(b)3.2	(b)1.7	0.4	*	0.2	*	-	-	6.2
August	3.1	(b)1.4	(b)0.4	*	*	*	*	-	5.8
November	(b)2.6	(b)1.0	(b)0.4	*	*	(b)0.1	*	-	5.0
1980 - February	2.4	(b)1.2	(b)0.4	*	*	(b)0.2	*	-	5.0
For males or females -									
1979 - May	4.8	4.7	1.3	0.9	0.7	*	0.2	0.6	13.3
August	4.5	4.8	1.5	0.9	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.7	13.4
November	5.4	5.4	2.1	1.0	0.9	(b)0.6	0.2	0.8	16.3
1980 - February	6.2	5.6	2.0	0.7	0.8	(b)0.4	*	0.8	16.9
Manufacturing (c) -									
1979 - May	3.9	4.1	(b)0.7	0.7	(b)0.4	0.1	-	-	9.8
August	4.5	3.6	0.7	*	(b)0.2	0.1	-	-	10.1
November	4.1	2.7	0.5	0.5	(b)0.5	0.1	-	-	8.5
1980 - February	6.9	3.3	(b)0.4	(b)0.5	(b)0.5	*	*	-	12.1
Other industries (d) -									
1979 - May	10.1	6.5	2.8	1.5	1.8	(b)0.7	0.5	0.7	24.5
August	9.3	5.9	3.1	(b)1.2	1.6	(b)0.5	0.4	0.8	22.9
November	10.7	6.2	3.8	1.1	1.9	(b)0.8	0.4	0.9	25.9
1980 - February	10.2	7.0	3.5	1.0	2.0	(b)0.8	0.5	0.8	25.7
Government -									
1979 - May	4.7	2.9	1.7	0.9	0.9	*	0.2	0.6	12.3
August	3.9	2.3	1.9	0.8	0.9	*	0.2	0.7	11.0
November	5.4	4.0	2.6	(b)0.7	0.9	*	0.2	0.8	15.4
1980 - February	6.6	3.8	2.4	0.6	1.0	*	(b)0.3	0.7	15.9
Private -									
1979 - May	9.4	7.6	1.8	1.3	1.3	0.3	0.3	(b)0.1	22.0
August	10.0	7.2	1.9	(b)1.3	1.0	0.2	0.3	(b)0.1	22.0
November	9.4	4.8	1.8	0.9	1.5	(b)0.2	0.3	-	18.9
1980 - February	10.4	6.5	1.5	1.0	1.5	*	(b)0.4	(b)0.1	21.9
JOB VACANCY RATES (per cent)									
1977 - May	0.7	1.2	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.1	2.7	2.4	0.9
August	0.8	1.2	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.1	1.7	2.4	0.9
November	0.7	1.1	0.5	0.6	0.9	1.3	1.3	2.7	0.9
1978 - February	0.8	1.1	0.5	0.6	0.7	1.0	2.0	2.9	0.8
May	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.8	2.3	2.6	0.8
1979 - May (e)	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.7	1.0	0.8
August	0.9	0.8	0.7	(b)0.6	0.5	(b)0.5	1.5	1.1	0.8
November	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.4	0.7	0.8	1.5	1.2	0.8
1980 - February	1.1	0.9	0.7	0.4	0.7	(b)0.8	(b)2.5	1.1	0.9

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 8 to 10. (b) Standard error greater than 20 per cent but less than 30 per cent. (c) ASIC Division C. (d) note (c) to Table 1. (e) See paragraphs 11 and 12 regarding discontinuity of the series.